



198 Park Road, 2nd Floor
West Hartford, CT 06119
(860) 231-8842
www.EnvironmentConnecticut.org

Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps
Environment Connecticut Program Director

Before the Connecticut General Assembly Committee on
Higher Education and Employment Advancement

Thursday, February 18, 2010

Opposing HB 5025, AAC A Green Technology, Life Science And Health Information
Technology Jobs Loan Forgiveness Program.

Senator Handley, Representative Willis, and members of the Committee:

Environment Connecticut offers these comments and concerns regarding HB 5025. We strongly support and applaud efforts by Governor Rell and the General Assembly to promote growth in "green" business sectors in Connecticut. However, it is important that such efforts do not undercut existing efforts such as clean energy and energy efficiency investments. Unfortunately, HB 5025 as it has been drafted would result in just such negative consequences for Connecticut's clean energy and energy efficiency programs.

Comments on Section 1:

The definition of "Green Technology" in lines 1 through 12 is so broad as to potentially include any technology regardless of its environmental benefit. For example, the "development of alternative fuels" could be interpreted to include environmentally damaging technologies such as certain biofuels or liquefied coal. We would encourage amendments to clarify that technologies included in this definition meet specific environmental criteria, such as requiring "alternative fuels" to produce net life-cycle reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG), limit energy generation technologies to Class I renewable energy sources, reduction of air and water pollution, etc. Such criteria should be established in consultation with the Department of Environmental Protection.

Comments **opposing** Section 1(a):

This section, beginning in line 41 and ending in line 45 proposes to divert \$3 million dollars annually from the utility ratepayer-funded Conservation and Load Management Fund. Environment Connecticut strongly opposes this idea which would "raid" the existing Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund programs that provide direct benefits to ratepayers in the form of reduced utility bills and also benefit Connecticut's environment

by reducing polluting emissions from electric power plants. This diversion of ratepayer funds for use in funding the loan forgiveness program created in section 1 of this legislation would reduce support for businesses creating “green jobs” in Connecticut, slowing “green job” creation and undercutting the goal of incentivizing students to enter these fields.

This funding mechanism runs counter to the goals of this legislation, would undermine Connecticut’s energy efficiency programs, and would harm utility ratepayers. Environment Connecticut urges the committee to amend HB 5025 to eliminate the Conservation and Load Management Fund as a source of funding for this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony raising our concerns regarding HB 5025 as drafted.

Sincerely,

Christopher Phelps
Program Director
Environment Connecticut